

CONFIDENTIAL - F. RUSSO  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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KELLEY AMADEI, et al.,  
Plaintiffs,

Civil No. 17 Civ.  
(NGG) (VMS)

vs.  
KIRSTJEN NIELSEN, et al.,  
Defendant.

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\* \* \*CONFIDENTIAL\* \* \*  
VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION OF FRANCIS J. RUSSO  
New York, New York  
August 30, 2018

Reported by:

KATHY S. KLEPFER, RMR, RPR, CRR, CLR

JOB NO. 146015

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2 flight?

3 A. It's not --

4 MS. OLDS: Objection.

5 You can answer.

6 A. It's not standard procedure. We don't  
7 have a procedure when it comes to domestic  
8 passengers.

9 Q. What about with respect to any flight,  
10 whether domestic or international; was it  
11 standard procedure to search -- to check the  
12 identification of all the passengers on the  
13 flight to identify a passenger?

14 MS. OLDS: Objection. He answered  
15 already with respect to domestic.

16 You can answer.

17 A. With respect to international flights,  
18 we have a process and protocols in place for how  
19 we identify passengers.

20 Q. And that includes checking the  
21 identification of those passengers?

22 A. Yes, we have a procedure in place that  
23 we utilize to identify passengers.

24 Q. Okay. So we may come back to that  
25 later.

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2 issued by the New York Field Office, do they  
3 have those -- the same restrictions, that they  
4 need to be not in conflict with headquarters'  
5 policies; is that right?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And do they also need to be not in  
8 conflict with other policies at other Field  
9 Offices?

10 A. Generally, yes, most -- the Field  
11 Offices know that they should be consistent with  
12 each other.

13 Q. And are you aware of any instances in  
14 which a New York Field Office policy was  
15 inconsistent with another Field Office policy?

16 A. I don't recall any at this time.

17 Q. And what about headquarters, are there  
18 any restrictions on the policies that  
19 headquarters can issue?

20 A. I'm not sure because I don't work  
21 there, but, you know, generally, they -- they  
22 would issue policy that is consistent with what  
23 the department is asking for as well.

24 Q. And as far as you're aware, there's no  
25 policy at headquarters that deals with

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2 identification checks of domestic passengers?

3 A. There is no policy.

4 Q. And there's no policy at the New York  
5 Field Office relating to checks of --  
6 identification checks of domestic passengers?

7 A. There is no policy.

8 Q. And there is no policy at the JFK Port  
9 of Entry relating to identification checks of  
10 domestic passengers?

11 A. There is not.

12 Q. And are you aware of any policy  
13 relating to identification checks of domestic  
14 air passengers anywhere at CBP?

15 A. I am not aware of any policy of  
16 domestic checks.

17 Q. Again, I want to make sure my question  
18 is clear that it relates to policies pertaining  
19 to identification checks of CB -- of passengers  
20 on domestic flights?

21 A. There is -- yeah, there is no policy  
22 of identification checks of passengers on  
23 domestic flights.

24 Q. My question is not whether there's a  
25 policy requiring --

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2 A. Right.

3 Q. -- identification checks.

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. Is there a policy anywhere at CBP that  
6 you're aware of that relates to the procedures  
7 by which officers must follow when they are  
8 checking the identification of passengers on  
9 domestic flights?

10 A. No, there is not.

11 Q. CBP also has standard operating  
12 procedures?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Sometimes they're called SOPs?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Who issues standard operating  
17 procedures at CBP?

18 A. Could be headquarters or the Field  
19 Office or the port.

20 Q. So no other entity other than those  
21 three within the JFK chain of command?

22 A. I can't think of any right now.

23 Q. And so, in order to issue a standard  
24 praying procedure, what's the process that has  
25 to take place?

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2 that sentence, because he -- he mentioned  
3 international as well. So that sentence was not  
4 accurate.

5 So because of that and because of the  
6 fact that I just felt the rest of his e-mail  
7 implied that there was no SOP, there was no  
8 reason to say it.

9 Q. So, just so I understand, is it your  
10 testimony that there is in fact an SOP that is  
11 followed regarding the identification of  
12 arriving passengers traveling internationally?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. And there is not an SOP that is  
15 followed regarding the identification of  
16 arriving passengers traveling domestically?

17 A. Correct. We don't have a policy for  
18 domestic passengers because we don't identify  
19 passengers domestically.

20 Q. And you also don't have an SOP  
21 regarding domestic passengers?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. Then you next say, "The rest of it is  
24 good and basically outlines our policy."

25 What did you mean by that?

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2 Q. So, in connection with the incident,  
3 you had an e-mail exchange with Jordan Wells; is  
4 that right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And he's an attorney with the New York  
7 Civil Liberties Union?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Is this -- the e-mail at CBP 706, have  
10 you seen that before?

11 A. I have.

12 Q. Is that your e-mail communication with  
13 Mr. Wells on February 23?

14 A. It is.

15 Q. I'd like you to turn to page CBP 707,  
16 and in the middle of the page, there's an e-mail  
17 from you on February 23 at 12:21.

18 Do you see that?

19 A. I do.

20 Q. And you write to Mr. Wells and say,  
21 "Jordan, I'm not available for a call right now,  
22 but I can assure you that the story has nothing  
23 to do with anything you might be thinking. We  
24 were simply assisting our sister agency in  
25 tracking down one individual. Unfortunately,

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2 the story is being sensationalized and people  
3 are jumping to unnecessary conclusions."

4 What were the unnecessary conclusions  
5 that you were talking about in this e-mail?

6 A. This occurrence was on the heels of  
7 the executive order and a new administration,  
8 and some of the commentary indicated that this  
9 must be new orders from the new administration.

10 Q. But that was not the case?

11 A. It was not the case.

12 Q. If you go to page 706, at the very top  
13 of the page, there's an e-mail from you on  
14 February 23 at 3:33 p.m.

15 Do you see that?

16 A. I do.

17 Q. You -- this is you writing to Mr.  
18 Wells. You say, "Jordan - We do this every day.  
19 Someone took a picture and put it on Twitter.  
20 That's what led to the hysteria."

21 What did you mean "we do this every  
22 day"?

23 A. So I was responding specifically to  
24 the last part of his comment underneath where he  
25 says, you know, "many, many everyday people with



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2 prior removal orders." There are many, many  
3 everyday people with prior removal orders, and  
4 with respect to that, we, every day, are  
5 involved in refusing entry to individuals on the  
6 international side, and so that's something that  
7 happens every day. Beyond that, I was also  
8 referring to the fact that we help our partners  
9 every day.

10 So just trying to -- to make him  
11 understand that this was not something -- this  
12 was not part of something resulting from the new  
13 administration. This is what we do every day,  
14 help our partners and get involved in people who  
15 we refuse entry into the United States.

16 Q. So is there anything else that you  
17 were referring to other than, when you said "we  
18 do this every day," other than dealing with  
19 folks subject to removal orders and helping  
20 partners?

21 A. No.

22 Q. So is part of helping partners  
23 sometimes identifying a person of interest on a  
24 flight?

25 A. Not so much identifying, but